Dublin, July 19. 1861

Dear Mr May — I hope to send herewith a copy of the Title page, Preface & Contents of John Brown — printed upon thin paper specially to save postage. The book is finished at last, with the exception of the picture and index which goes as a brick by way of sample of the building. The cost of paper & printing for 1000 copies is about 1/10d or 44 cents per copy in sheets and without a photographic likeness, which we are getting in London from that of which you sent me some copies for sale. I have told you before that Miss Estlin was the projector & that my wife & I have been the compilers of this book — Miss E. guaranteeing the cost. We have taken very great pains to make it what it ought to be, & I think we have tolerably well succeeded in making a substantial & an interesting — but by no means a brilliant book. Our desire was far more to make John Brown shine than to shine ourselves. If it were ~~not~~ that a nameless book has little respect or authority, I could have kept from my name as editor. My wife had the beginning pretty much in her hands, & afterwards it fell chiefly into mine — but the proofs were carefully read & sifted by us both. We spared no labour. It occurred to me that possibly some of our friends on your side might be inclined to take some copies in sheets & to get them done up in America, with or without a likeness, which could be as readily had there as here. I think if I were to choose again I would have one from Brackett's bust, or from Hyatt's likeness, which is said to be very good — though Mrs. Webb says she thinks it too wild in the expression & I don't think so. I would be glad to have part of the burden taken off Miss Estlin, who is handing out very generously, & may never be repaid. To be sure it is her own idea, & that is a great consolation. There might possibly be some difficulty on the score of copyright though the book is as different as arrangement can make it from Redpath's, & has little in common with it except the similarity of events & the insertion in our book of Brown's autobiographical sketch with the correction of the bad spelling — and this production was Brown's — not Redpath's. Our book has a great deal of most interesting matter not in Redpath — not to mention the letters which you ~~have~~ supplied & which I have acknowledged in the preface. Of the preface Miss Estlin & her friend the Rev. Edwin Chapman speak in warm terms — & you will see that we have tried to give Redpath a proper place along with the inevitable dose of unflattering criticism.

Dr Cheever is now in Dublin, with his wife collecting money in which he has been successful. I like him very well — but ~~has~~ he has not the warmth & fervor of the Garrisonian sentiments — & probably he fights rather shy of me as I am not ortho-dox & am known not to be so. His remarks upon Brown which I have taken out of one of his sermons are glorious & I have given them at considerable length. He and his wife return to America on the 3rd of August & I wish to send some copies of the book to your care that you may judge for yourselves in case you are not quite satisfied to make up your minds from the book. In very many ways I made the bill for Brown less expensive (to the extent of a good many pounds) than if it had been an ordinary business transaction. Having a woman & a friend to act for, I was especially acting on honor & therefore I waived ~~all~~ any legitimate profit to which I would have been fairly entitled on paper, binding &c. Still the amount is so heavy that altho' [illegible] Miss Estlin says she is (& I believe is) quite satisfied I would be very glad if our friends in Massa-chusetts could take a portion of the edition. At the cost price of 1/10d in sheets I do not think you would lose if you were to charge a fair profit. Here owing to the binding & portrait & the large deductions made by the publishers, it will be necessary to name 5/- as the and this is lower than the ordinary price for a new book — I mean a newly-written book of so large a size. The original intention was to have it very much cheaper — but a very cheap book is out of the question unless the number printed be ~~very~~ much larger than in the present instance.

The President's message which has just reached us has no word about slavery, & fully recognizes the security of slave property. No great encouragement to the labor of abolitionists so far as men in power are concerned — This document fully justifies the absence of any enthusiasm in England on behalf of the North since it is clear that the only official alternative offered to the world is slavery with the Union or slavery without it — and in the latter case I imagine the chance of its abolition would be much greater since the North would be in no respect bound to maintain it — Should not the American Society buckle on their armour & go to work with as much energy as ever, seeing that they have nothing to hope from the White House or the President's advisers.

In making searches through the Liberator for particulars respecting John Brown I saw an advertisement from a Boston photographer of likenesses of, as he stated — all the Brown family. My wife & I entered so heartily into their affairs that we would like to have as many of them as are to be had. Perhaps you would kindly have enquiry made as to whether they are to be had, and, if so; what a set of them would cost. The name is Heywood & Heard, 10. Tremont Row

Yours ever Richd D. Webb

Ms.B.1.6 v.15, p.70